PUBLIC RELATIONS

CORPORATE ADVERTISING

IN DISGUISE?

Plus: Annual Corporate Advertising Expenditures Analysis

PUBLIC RELATIONS JOURNAL

September 1989 Vol. 45 No. 9

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Cover Photography: *Michael Sahaida*

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Identity crisis

Advertising and public relations have always had a love/hate relationship. In recent years, their traditional rivalry for corporate and institutional dollars has been thrown into a spotlight, as big ad agencies have acquired public relations firms of all sizes and the two disciplines have found themselves struggling to cooperate to serve the same masters. While there is agreement in principle that the client's needs should determine the mix of public relations, advertising and other marketing methods, public relations divisions too often play second fiddle to the siren song of advertising's bigger dollars.

Within this broader context, it's particularly interesting to look at corporate advertising, which has always been something of an anomaly, and as such has been a battleground for public relations and advertising for many years. In this area of advertising, where image is paramount, public relations has definitely staked a claim. But, as interviews with professionals specializing in this area make clear, the balance of creative power and control over budgets is by no means cut and dry. What makes clients choose a public relations firm versus an advertising agency to handle their corporate ads? Which recent corporate campaigns have had public relations professionals at the helm? Does corporate advertising yield documented public relations benefits? "Corporate Advertising: Public Relations in Disguise?" (*page 20*), deals with these and other questions regarding this hybrid endeavor.

For the rundown on who's spending how much on corporate advertising, take a look at our annual corporate advertising expenditures analysis *(page 28)*, now in its 18th year. And, to see some of the creative results of public relations-directed corporate ad campaigns, turn to the portfolio on page 32.

Breathes there a practitioner today who hasn't oft been heard to say: "What's that prospect thinking, anyway?" A.C. "Al" Croft, APR, a veteran practitioner who's been on both the pitch side and the client side (as a consultant) during many a firm search, offers a fictionalized but decidedly not fanciful portrayal of what each side is doing and thinking during the course of a typical search *(page 36)*.

Crisis-wise, the Exxon Valdez oil spill may have eclipsed all others in the minds of the public this year. But for other companies and organizations, the real lessons of 1989 came out of less mammoth but potentially devastating crises that directly impacted their own operations. In a special section beginning on page 15, Dorf & Stanton principal Alex Stanton surveys practitioners on what crisis management lessons they've learned during the past year. Mary Nowotny, vice president, Aaron D. Cushman & Associates, shares a personal account that illustrates why the old "Be Prepared" motto has its limitations.

Karlene Lukovitz, Editor

PRSA Public Relations Society of America
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(212) 995-2230

The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) is an individual membership professional society of 14,265 public relations practitioners. Its major services to members include programs of Professional Development and Accreditation, an Information Center, publications, tracking of issues of national concern, and promotion of ethical practice through adherence to PRSA's "Code of Professional Standards." PRSA's mission is "To serve the public need for understanding and cooperation among its diverse interests by fostering high professional and ethical standards for all those practicing public relations."

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Many still aren't prepared

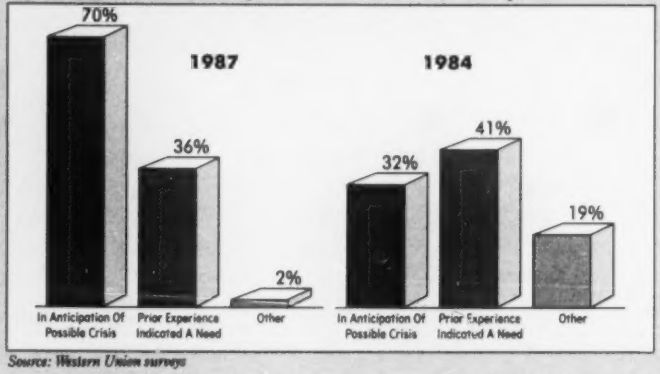
While corporate awareness of the need to plan for crisis communications seems higher than ever, a May 1987 research survey by Western Union—one of the most recent studies in this field—suggests that many of America's largest companies continue to be unprepared.

In 1984, Western Union had commissioned an initial survey of Fortune 1000 industrial companies and Fortune 500 service companies. At that time, only 53 percent of companies surveyed had an operational crisis communications plan. Three years later, only 57 percent of responding companies had a plan—a very modest improvement, considering the level of attention this area has received.

Not surprisingly, the more recent survey showed that companies with revenues over $1 billion are more likely to have an active crisis communications plan (75 percent) than smaller companies (41 percent).

At the same time, the number of companies citing anticipation of a crisis as the reason for establishing an operational plan more than doubled from 1984 to 1987, from 32 percent to 70 percent. The Western Union survey also found that eight of 10 companies with a plan in place reported having designated a crisis team.

Reasons for establishing a crisis communications plan



Source: Western Union surveys

they've gotten very positive publicity in their local communities."

At Phoenix House, a nonprofit organization that treats drug abuse patients in facilities in New York and California, a rash of salmonella poisoning the day after Christmas 1988 set crisis planning into motion in the new year.

"It was a slow news day in New York, so, when the television stations monitoring police 911 emergency medical service radios found out that we had 20 people sick with salmonella, our phones started ringing at 5 a.m. and cameras began arriving," recounts Christopher Policano, director of public information.

"Our lack of a formal plan resulted in a four-hour delay before I was notified, and some lag time in getting accurate information to the media. After I got there and verified that all the cases were mild, I got on the phone immediately to all the press people who had called and gave them the best information I had."

According to Policano, this experience helped convince Phoenix House of the basic necessity of having a crisis plan, and that the public relations representative plays a vital role in such situations.

Phoenix House executives also learned the importance of setting up a crisis team. Since the poisoning incident, "we've had lots of debate about what constitutes a crisis, and at what point different people need to get involved," he says. "But everyone agrees that we need a well-crafted plan and that four key disciplines need to be represented: clinical services, administration, legal and public information."

Most crisis experts, of course, agree that the first step in any effective crisis management plan should be designating a crisis team, ideally a small group of quick decision makers who represent all the key functions. These should be cool-headed people who operate well under pressure, and who are fully familiar with the crisis plan and playbook.

The most critical job of the team is to realistically define the scope and severity of the crisis. Since all future decisions and judgment calls will flow from this determination, they must not overestimate or underestimate the severity of the situation as it unfolds.

Staying cool/reaching all audiences

At St. Louis-based Purina Mills, a leading manufacturer of animal feeds with 65 plants across the country, a comprehensive crisis management plan was set in place in early 1988. But the plan was severely tested last May when barium carbonate, the toxic chemical used to control rats, was discovered in milk produced by farms in two states feeding Purina products.

"This was not a routine situation," recalls Max Fisher, director of corporate communications at Purina Mills. "It took a long time before federal and state investigators were able to determine that the contamination occurred when a railroad car previously used to transport barium carbonate was not cleaned properly before soybean hulls were loaded and shipped to our plant in Shreveport, Louisiana for use as a feed ingredient. We issued a recall of all feed manufactured by the plant over a 10-day period as soon as we realized what happened."

Fisher says involvement in a crisis that "crossed over into the food chain" reinforced the importance of taking good care of customers when you're under the gun. Purina Mills safeguarded its relationship with customers during this crisis by communicating quickly and honestly. "Our technical specialist at the plant level contacted the farmers directly, while our field sales force got on the phone to all Purina dealers in the affected area over the weekend," he explains. "A letter to all customers was also sent from headquarters as soon as we identified the problem."

"I think that a lot of companies fail to communicate effectively with their loyal customers when they're in a crisis situation," he notes. For example, he says, Exxon might have avoided many public relations problems if it had immediately communicated with its credit card customers about the situation in Alaska and clean up efforts, if it had monitored reaction to notifications, and had reacted accordingly. □

Alex Stanton, APR, is president of Dorf & Stanton, which was recently purchased by Shandwick plc. Dorf & Stanton has offices in New York, St. Louis and Stamford, Connecticut.

CORPORATE ADVERTISING

Joan Reisman

By its very nature, corporate advertising often calls for involvement by both the public relations and advertising camps. When should one versus the other be in the driver's seat?

Corporate advertising—advertising on behalf of the corporation as an institution rather than on behalf of its specific products or services—has long been something of an oddity within the advertising family. It has a wayward tendency to turn up in corporate communications and public relations departments—and even to enter the world through public relations firms—instead of following the path of its big brother, product advertising, from the marketing department through the ad agencies.

Despite the shared surname, corporate advertising is in many critical respects less closely related to hard-sell product advertising than to investor and public relations, with their embrace of complex objectives and issues.

Issue of identity

Although the borders that set corporate advertising apart from product/service advertising and public relations are fuzzy, certain functions fall squarely within the specialty.

The classic roles of corporate advertising are image and issues advertising. Image ads seek to give a company a specific, recognizable "face" to its public. This identity-building role is particularly important in corporate transitions, in which the name stays the same but the company changes, or the company stays the same but the name changes. In the wake of mergers and acquisitions, two or more distinct companies become one indistinct one, often with additions and discontinuances of lines of business, as well as name changes that drop the prior identity of at least one party (e.g., Sperry Corp. and Burroughs Corp. became Unisys Corp.).

Corporate advertising may also be used when a company is little-known or poorly understood among important audiences, such as financial analysts and current or potential stockholders. For example, Ball Corporation, best known for the beloved jars that contain Grandma's jam and pickles, is heavily involved in aerospace and defense.

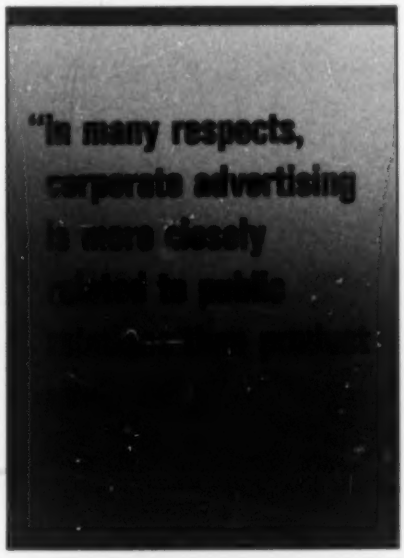
And then, of course, corporate advertising can be called upon to counter a bad image or to swing public opinion in the direction of the company's viewpoint. A pioneer in this area is Mobil Corporation, which raised issues advertising to new prominence by popularizing the "advertorial"—paid advertising on the Op-Ed page—during the OPEC oil crisis of the 1970s. Mobil balanced this advertising offensive with high-profile sponsorships of such programs as "Masterpiece Theatre."

Terrence N. Hill, executive vice president and director of corporate advertising at Burson-Marsteller, also lists a category called "fight ads."

"Used in such crisis situations as takeovers, these ads can be pulled together overnight, and we often prepare contingency ads in anticipation of our opposition's moves," he says.

Bottom line isn't forgotten

More than a decade ago, corporate advertising was heralded as a panacea for a multitude of marketing challenges. "As an



umbrella to cover an entire line of products, corporate advertising was expected to cut the costs for individual brand advertising," says Hill. "But in fact, corporate advertising is always the first thing cut." It is far more vulnerable than product advertising because its budgets are so much leaner and because of the perception that product ads have a more direct impact on the bottom line. "When things are tough, budgets for product ads might be reduced, but funding for corporate ads may be wiped out completely," says Hill. Nevertheless, corporate ad expenditures as a whole have been steadily rising for the past five years. (*See tables, pages 22, 28, 30.*)

Although corporate advertising may arise from little more than an uneasy suspicion among top executives that a company needs to be better understood for what it does and what it stands for, the lean and mean companies of the '80s demand accountability for any significant ad expenditures. Measuring the effectiveness of corporate advertising is quite distinct from measuring product/service advertising, according to James Foster, president and CEO of Brouillard Communications, a corporate communications firm that began within J. Walter Thompson advertising and is now part of the WPP network.

"With traditional advertising, you want the audience to get up out of their chairs and buy whatever you're selling," he notes, "but with corporate advertising, you're tracking shifts of awareness and attitude. You're looking not only for what messages you've conveyed, but what unintended messages are being received. Unlike product advertising, these effects can't be assessed on the basis of an individual ad."

Foster equates the task of measuring the results of a corporate ad campaign with that of measuring public relations results. "Quite often, it's impossible to segregate PR and corporate ad results unless each program focused on entirely distinct messages," he observes.

In 1986 and 1988, Brouillard commissioned Yankelovich Clancy Shulman to survey 45 large companies to determine how companies with strong reputations have built them. Among the findings, companies judged to be "winners" on average spent 235 percent more on corporate advertising than their less-admired peers.

"Our studies confirmed that being seen as a winner has a tangible value—in marketing, investment decisions, joint ventures, plant siting and attracting the best and brightest employees," says Foster.

According to the surveys, corporate advertisers gain an edge in several key areas, including:

- likelihood of business people to buy or recommend purchase of its products;
- amount respondents would be willing to invest in the company;
- likelihood of their seeking credible information from the company, and
- willingness of respondents to sell their own businesses to the company.

"For a packaged goods company, a strong corporate identity can translate into greater ease in introducing new products, either through a less expensive or more effective launch," Foster adds. "Companies are finding that a small in-

vestment in their corporate reputation can result in big payoffs."

It can also make a life or death difference during a crisis. After the incidents of bad vichyssoise soup a few years back, the unknown firm Bon Vivant went out of business, while Campbell scarcely lost a case sale. "Reputational equity is something you can fall back on in times of need," Foster says. "But, like asparagus, you have to plant it a few years before you can use it."

Tracking the transformation

Although measuring the effectiveness of a particular corporate advertising campaign is tricky, there are a few effective ways to do it. "Financial analysts may assure you that they pay no attention to corporate ads," says Foster, "but research shows that when a material piece of information about a company has been planted in an ad, and nowhere else, the analysts pick up that fact, which indicates that the ads are reaching them."

For Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company, Akron, Ohio, Brouillard conducted man-on-the-street interviews to develop an anthropomorphic "Who is Goodyear?" company profile before and after a corporate ad campaign. "In the 'before' phase, Goodyear was seen as reliable and honest, but rather old and stodgy," explains Foster. "After a series of ads featuring the company's efforts not only in tires but also in computers, shoe insoles, car airsprings, and roofing, the company profile retained its positive characteristics, but this time what came through was a younger, more exciting and innovative persona."

The primary target of the campaign was Goodyear employees, and company spirit rose in response to the message that Goodyear was not doing things the same old way. "Incidental benefits included an increase in Defense Department bids," Foster adds. "And, Goodyear roofing sales went through the roof."

For Rohm and Haas Company, a Philadelphia-based specialty chemical company with headquarters, two plants, and a research facility in Pennsylvania's Delaware Valley, the decision to pursue corporate advertising both arose from and was confirmed by survey results.

"In 1985–86, a Roper poll indicated that R&H's Delaware Valley neighbors were unaware of who the company was," says Philip M. Stefanini, director of corporate affairs. "Although the company has been in the area for 80 years, that wasn't surprising, because our products are not things people find on the shelf, and our advertising had been strictly trade and institutional support."

But what was surprising and distressing was that, among those professing familiarity with the company, there was no awareness of the extensive activities R&H had been conducting not only on behalf of its employees but also within the community. The problem wasn't that people thought R&H was a pharmaceutical company. "We were disturbed that they gave us a neutral ranking as a corporate citizen, and indicated that we ought to be doing more," Stefanini says.

The company developed an integrated corporate public relations and advertising program with Ketchum PR/Philadelphia—not to do more, but to make what R&H was already doing more visible. In May 1988, a follow-up Roper poll was conducted. "The second survey showed not only a statistically significant improve-

Wall Street Journal advertising

January to December 1988
(ranked by total media dollars in $ thousands)

Top 10 spenders: corporations

	1988 Pages	1988 Dollars
1. Merrill Lynch	80,271	$4,227,489
2. IBM	68,453	3,412,036
3. General Electric	61,422	3,172,305
4. United Technologies	46,548	2,659,223
5. Drexel Burnham Lambert	49,374	2,526,719
6. Salomon Inc	47,080	2,446,882
7. NYNEX	47,081	2,292,106
8. American Express	42,353	2,201,999
9. Texas Instruments	40,380	2,046,976
10. Chase Manhattan	39,106	2,009.041
Top 10 Total	522,068	26,994,776
Total: All Others	2,065,493	107,946,560
Report Total (all companies reporting)	2,587,561	134,941,336

Top 10 spenders: associations

	1988 Pages	1988 Dollars
1. Blue Cross & Blue Shield Assn.	14,228	$720,476
2. American Gas Assn.	12,015	606,360
3. U.S. Council for Energy Awareness	7,824	472,076
4. American Institute of Certified Public Accountants	8,896	449,466
5. Teachers Insurance & Annuity Assn. of America	5,328	301,564
6. Open Software Foundation	3,632	219,950
7. Acura Dealers Assn.	3,008	206,263
8. American Bankers Assn.	3,552	179,484
9. National Heart Savers Assn.	3,552	179,484
10. Ford Auto Dealers Assn.	2,700	170,965
Top 10 Total	64,735	3,506,088
Total: All Others	16,338	1,020,091
Report Total (all companies reporting)	81,073	4,526,179

Data ranked on 1988 dollars. Source: Leading National Advertisers.

ment, but also trend indicators of an overall shift in direction," Stefanini reports. "We can't separate the effects of the corporate ads from those of the PR activities, but clearly we were doing something right."

Cheap shark repellent

Corporate advertising campaigns can make companies more attractive and valuable. Yet, just as important these days, it does not appear to encourage hostile takeovers. On the contrary, it is generally considered a strong defense.

"The people looking for takeover prospects are going to get their information from computerized databases and other sources," says Foster. "It is unlikely that a corporate ad will give them an idea they didn't already have."

And corporate advertising can shore up the company's protection. "After our Goodyear diversification campaign, there was a hostile takeover attempt, which caused the company to sell off some of its businesses," Foster says. "While the successful ad campaign was not considered to be responsible for the attempt, it was a factor in fending it off."

The goodwill that the ads generated contributed to support from Washington, D.C., the Ohio legislature, and the community—including rallies in the football stadium. "Just as 'body English' sends out signals about who is an easy victim, the most aggressive companies—such as those who put themselves forward in corporate ads—are the most immune to hostile takeovers," he maintains.

Superimposing products, producers

Despite the demarcation between corporate and product/service ads, corporate advertising frequently contains information about the company's products and services, and it's often hard to distinguish into which category the ad falls. "With a name like Smucker's, it's got to be good," is a product ad that uses the company name as a selling proposition. But the Goodyear series that showcased a variety of the firm's products under the banner, "You have the blimp behind you," was a corporate advertisement that incidentally sold products.

Particularly when the company and product names are the same, the two arms of advertising can play off one another. "This is most evident in a commodity situation when you're selling intangibles, such as financial services," says Foster. "Once you get past price and what you can say about the differences between competitive products, you have to focus on selling the producer. Sometimes the only way to tell a corporate ad

Continued

Image Power!

The Company Image by Elinor and Joe Selame (John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York) is a great resource for corporate communications executives. Case histories, photos, anecdotes and interviews with Fortune 500 executives and CEOs of smaller entrepreneurial companies explain the importance of corporate identity and its impact on the bottom line.

"Rich with anecdotes -- stories of serendipitous successes and costly failures... Through extensive personal interviews and secondary research, the Selames have covered the field (corporate identity) superbly." -- *Public Relations Journal, June 1989*

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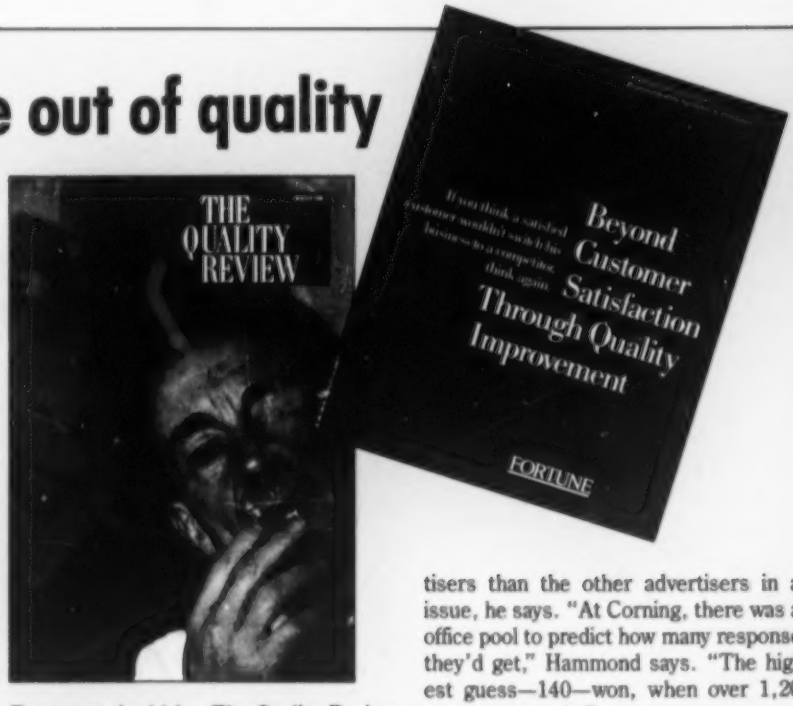
Making an issue out of quality

In recent years, certain issues—productivity, searching for excellence, one-minute managing—have gone in and out of vogue both as corporate causes and as facets of the images companies wish to project. But attention to quality and output has been in the forefront throughout the decade, as Japanese competition has made U.S. firms take a hard look at this area.

The Quality Review is a corporate advertising vehicle that literally makes an issue of an issue: namely, quality. *TQR* describes itself as "a quarterly magazine designed to identify and promote broad applications of quality improvement for all aspects of a business enterprise, from design and manufacturing to marketing and customer service." It is co-published by two non-profit organizations, the American Quality Foundation and the American Society for Quality Control.

According to publisher Joshua Hammond, the magazine grew out of observing top executives during the organizations' conferences on quality. "They were asking fundamental questions, seeking information in their own language and broad strategic applications for their own corporations," he says. "We needed to bring the concept of quality from the factory floor to the executive offices."



Two targeted vehicles, The Quality Review *and a* Fortune *special advertising supplement, are helping advertisers to convey their quality stories to influential business audiences.*

Teaming up: ads and advertorials

The organizations created both *TQR* and a quality-themed annual *Fortune* magazine advertising supplement five years ago. The goal was not only to provide executives with the information they lacked, but also to give them an opportunity to position their companies as committed to quality principles.

Corporate participants are called sponsors rather than advertisers. "They pay a premium for more than just an ad," Hammond explains. That premium is $285,000 per year, for which each sponsor of *TQR* gets an advertorial—a profile on the company, subject to its editorial approval—in an issue that does not carry other advertising for the company. The former policy of a single sponsor per issue is being changed to allow eight, non-competing sponsors per issue over a one-year cycle, so that each sponsor gets a profile in one issue and ads in the other three.

"The rationale is to provide more frequency," says Hammond. "In many cases, due to the unusual format of the magazine and its distinctive focus, special ads are created, and sponsors want to get more than one-shot mileage out of them."

TQR touts its high-level, controlled circulation of 320,000 worldwide, which includes the top seven executives at each Fortune 500 service and industrial company; the top executive at the next 10,000 companies; the "top 1 percent" in Washington, D.C. (key administrators, cabinet members, members of Congress); governors; mayors of the top 1,000 cities; nearly 4,000 financial analysts; university presidents and deans; labor unions; the sponsor's key customers and suppliers and top advertising and public relations executives. "The PR and ad execs are among our most active readers," Hammond maintains.

Supplement draws big response

Fortune supplement sponsors—who pay one-time rates of between $15,000 for a one-third page black-and-white ad and $61,000 for a full-page color ad—get a profile along with an ad that reaches 750,000 *Fortune* readers worldwide.

"The Adverbatim recall studies showed that the supplement scores very high for 'recall seeing,' and even higher for 'recall reading'—38 percent higher than the ads in the rest of the issue," Hammond reports. Reader response cards to request further information garner 14 to 20 percent higher returns for supplement advertisers than the other advertisers in an issue, he says. "At Corning, there was an office pool to predict how many responses they'd get," Hammond says. "The highest guess—140—won, when over 1,200 requests came in."

Sponsors also receive reprints of the supplement, and their ads and profiles are incorporated into seminars, videotapes, and other *Fortune* tie-in programs.

Some limits on sponsors

Not every company can be a sponsor. "We didn't want a discount brokerage house, and we wouldn't accept Union Carbide after the explosion in India, because such sponsorship could be embarrassing for the two quality organizations we represent," Hammond says.

"But we had no problem with General Motors as one of our first sponsors, even though, at the time, Ford had a much stronger reputation for quality cars," he says, noting that yearly sponsorships are exclusive within industry categories. "Our profile focused not on GM cars, but on the inertial navigational system developed by the Delco Electronics Division of GM's Hughes subsidiary."

AT&T, the first *TQR* sponsor, agreed to fund one issue if three other high-quality companies would also commit to the first year. American Express made the decision in 48 hours. GM and Corning completed the group.

The force behind sponsorship at American Express was a corporate communications person; the spearheads at the other three charter companies were vice presidents for quality assurance.

One of them, David B. Luther, senior vice president and corporate director of quality for Corning, became involved in sponsoring *TQR* and the *Fortune* supplement as an extension of the company's

1987 participation in National Quality Month, an event initiated by the American Society for Quality Control in 1985.

"Our goal was to get our name linked with quality in the minds of our customers," says Luther. "With 64,000 products in a multinational market, we felt these publications, along with our other quality-related activities, would reach a broad constituency." Luther notes that his job is quality, not advertising, and that these particular vehicles are now saturated for Corning's purposes.

"We will be using our resources for other devices to deliver the quality message," he says, noting that Corning has sponsored seminars on quality, and is developing a 20-page handout on quality to respond to the many inquiries the company receives.

In contrast, Joseph R. Bransky, director, corporate quality and reliability for GM, plans to continue advertising in *TQR*, the *Fortune* supplement, and a similar advertising section in *Forbes* magazine. "Our primary interest in these vehicles is neither the advertising nor the editorial coverage GM gets out of them," he says. "It's the issue itself. Improving the understanding of total quality management is important enough for us to sponsor publications on it."

Bransky says that the proposal for GM to sponsor *TQR* and the *Fortune* supplement was first made to him, and he fostered the idea within the company. "We saw the benefits of sponsorship, decided it was the right thing to do, and then worked closely with the corporate advertising staffs to make it happen," he reports. "There have been no turf issues—in fact, it has enhanced the relationships."

Finding the sponsorship sponsor

Hammond cites the importance of zeroing in on the players within the organization who will grab the idea and run with it—rather than from it. "The hardest people to sell on a concept like this are the advertising executives," says Hammond. "When they hear 'quality,' they don't envision something they can advertise. They're used to selling the products, not selling how the products are produced."

In contrast, he says, the corporate public relations people love the idea but may not have access to the money. "We've learned that we have to gather all the affected parties—advertising, PR, quality control, and the CEO—when we present the concept," says Hammond. "Then we can get a decision." In a few instances, the decision was made by a CEO who instructed each department to ante up a portion of the cost, he notes. —*J.R.*

"General Motors and the UAW are jointly committed to customer satisfaction. Quality people are maintaining GM's leadership. We're continuously improving with teamwork and technology. We're producing new cars and trucks that we're proud to build, and that our customers will be proud to own."

Custom-made quality: *AT&T (above), Chrysler, and Mack Trucks, Inc. were among the* Fortune *supplement sponsors who already had the perfect ad to run in the special section on quality.*

While other companies chose to run their regular ads, even if they contained no explicit quality message, a few invested in creating ads expressly for this ad/advertorial vehicle. IBM created a simple page linking "National Quality Month" with its corporate message.

And General Motors President Robert C. Stempel pushed through a special ad (above, right) against the advice of editors, publishers, and art directors, who deemed it cluttered with messages and images. It scored the highest reader recall in the entire Fortune *supplement. Maybe that's why he's president.*

from a product ad is to find out what budget it came out of."

Pushing the envelope of corporate advertising even further is one-man-show Donald Trump, who runs full-page newspaper ads calling for the death penalty one month, and tells you how he's revamping the former Eastern Shuttle the next. When viewed in isolation, the airline ad is technically a product/service promotion, and the death penalty plea is a rich man's letter to the editor. But their style, voice and context are pure Trump, and the subliminal message, bolstered by publicity about Trump's feats in politics and business, is, "If this dynamo is behind it, you should be too."

When is advertising PR?

According to Robert L. Dilenschneider, president of Hill & Knowlton, formerly the public relations subsidiary of J. Walter Thompson and now its sister company (along with Brouillard) under the WPP umbrella, "advertising is advertising is advertising," and corporate advertising is not part of public relations.

Although H&K occasionally handles a corporate ad for a public relations client, Dilenschneider does not count income from any paid communications as part of public relations operations for O'Dwyer's rankings, and corporate advertising is never the centerpiece of any accounts. "H&K is more likely to pass corporate advertising assignments out to one of its sister companies—J. Walter Thompson, Lord Geller, or Brouillard, depending upon what skills we need to tap and where," he says. "For example, one of our PR clients recently had a crisis that warranted a corporate ad, so we asked Lord Geller to construct and place it."

Dilenschneider notes that, in such cases, efforts are coordinated through a committee that includes advertising, public relations, public affairs and client representatives. "With the conglomeration of big companies such as WPP, WCRS, Interpublic, and Saatchi & Saatchi," he says, "big agencies are trying to sell the client on one-stop shopping in which they can get anything in the agency store."

In contrast, another giant public relations firm espouses a strong kinship between corporate advertising and public relations. Burson-Marsteller highlights corporate advertising as one of the services it offers its clients, and Hill, who is an alumnus of Brouillard, considers it an integral part of the public relations plan.

Although B-M's program for Sara Lee Corporation's "Front Runner Awards" to women in business, government, the arts, and humanities/public service falls primarily on the "P" side of the "adver-

tising/promotion split," it is supported by a series of four corporate ads. The ads are written and photographed by women (Maya Angelou and E.J. Camp, respectively) and announce the four winners. "There is no mention of Sara Lee or its products in the body copy or graphics," says Hill, "just a sponsorship tag-line."

The strategy, he explains, is for the ads to extend the impact of the awards to a larger audience, and for a longer duration, than could be achieved by public relations activities alone. While there is no hard sell, the program targets Sara Lee purchasers. "Although nobody doesn't *like* Sara Lee, women *buy* the vast majority of the company's products, including L'eggs and Hanes hosiery and Coach leather goods, as well as its foods," says Hill.

For Rohm and Haas, the decision whether to place the corporate communications program with an ad or public relations agency came down to the firm that most closely united the two disciplines. "We invited a number of PR firms, among them a few of the New York giants, as well as advertising firms—including one handling our products—to give us an integrated ad/PR proposal," says Stefanini. "Ketchum Public Relations won, partly because of its relevant experience with Dow Chemical, and partly because of its close relationship with Ketchum Advertising." In fact, the Philly offices of Ketchum's ad and public relations groups are in the same building, on the same floor.

But why did R&H go in through the public relations door? "We felt that the PR side was better equipped both to do the PR and to make the connection with advertising, rather than the reverse," says Stefanini.

According to Ketchum Public Relations account executive Betsy Wollam, the ad and public relations teams meet monthly, and work closely to coordinate the program. "Although the ads are done on the ad side, the entire program is PR-driven," she says. "We're proud of how efficiently we work together."

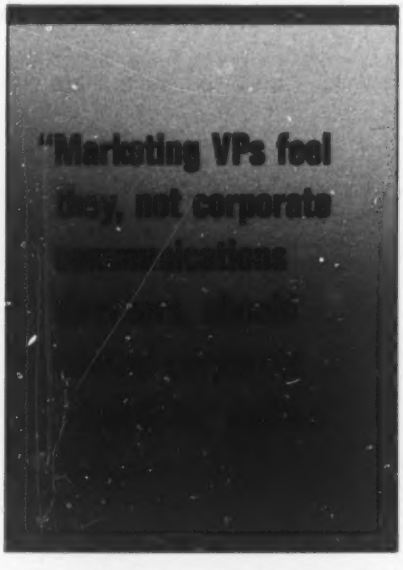
Ketchum's Philadelphia office has several shared corporate public relations/ad accounts, and the route is increasingly becoming a two-way street. "We often bring in advertising people when we propose a program, and the ad people are now bringing us in, as well," says Wollam. "A further advantage is, regardless of the original balance, we are able to accommodate shifts in emphasis between the ad and PR sides as the account evolves."

Custody battles

Unlike product advertising, which is clearly the ward of the vice president of marketing (VPM), corporate advertising is the baby of the chief executive officer, who generally entrusts it to the director of corporate communications (DCC). Still, corporate advertising often sparks budget disputes between marketing and communications groups.

"Even when the VPM is handling a $300 million budget for product advertising, he or she considers the $3 million going to corporate advertising to be dollars that marketing should control—and control differently," says B-M's Hill.

Jurisdictional disputes also occur in the implementation of corporate advertising programs. "Usually the person who champions corporate advertising is the CEO, but he or she doesn't personally get the job done. Instead, the task typically falls to the DCC, who is probably a PR person," Hill says.



The skills that are effective in selling toothpaste and shampoos, or any other products, are not the skills required for a corporate advertising program. So when the DCC calls upon product marketing people to execute the CEO's dream, problems of language, viewpoint and agenda often arise. "But if the DCC turns to PR people to handle the job, it turns out that, while they understand the issues, they may know nothing about doing ads," Hill says. "That's another reason why there has not been more and better corporate advertising."

Often, whether corporate advertising ends up with advertising or public relations professionals depends upon the entry point. "When Colgate wanted to develop corporate ads regarding the closing of their Jersey City, NJ, plant, they turned to B-M because we were already counseling them on corporate issues," says Hill.

Similarly, corporate advertising is often an outgrowth of investor relations, which is usually handled by public relations counselors. "The people who are already communicating about a company with the analysts and investors are the obvious choice to handle corporate advertising," Hill observes.

Most of the experts agree that corporate advertising goes hand in hand with other facets of corporate communications, including training company spokespersons to handle interviews, setting up press events and analyst meetings, and communicating with shareholders, legislators, and the community.

"Advertising people may be great with ads, but PR people know how to take it farther: how to work with complex issues and situations, not only how to direct attention where it is beneficial but also how to deflect attention away from the opposition," Hill contends. "This is beyond the realm of standard advertising."

Propagating the hybrid

Hill and Foster cite a need for corporate advertising and corporate communications specialists who can harness both advertising and public relations expertise. "Both Gregory Furman, Brouillard's senior president and managing director, and I, have experience in advertising and PR, on the client and counselor sides," says Foster, "and we're working to get our younger staff members conversant in both disciplines."

Hill sees corporate advertising increasingly moving into public relations firms because it rates more attention there. "For the typical ad agency, a $5 million budget for a corporate campaign is scarcely worth the cost and effort of dedicating experts to the account," he says. "But for a PR firm, that's a major piece of business on which no effort will be spared."

At B-M, Hill's expertise is used as a selling tool to win accounts, even if they ultimately do not include a corporate advertising component. "Having a corporate advertising consultant on board is a definite asset," he maintains. "We can help a client recognize what PR can and can't do, and what corporate ads can and can't do. For example, ads can't go into the depth that PR can." On the other hand, Foster notes, "PR can't achieve widespread awareness as fast as a corporate ad campaign."

The consensus among practitioners interviewed is that all corporate image communications elements need to be pulled together in an integrated marketing program. "Corporate advertising is becoming the company's voice, and an uncoordinated attempt to speak to the public is

inefficient at best," says Foster. The voice must be that of the chief executive. "Unlike product advertising, in which you can create an image like the Marlboro Man, corporate images can be creat*ive*, but not creat*ed*," he adds. "They have to be firmly based in the reality of the company and its CEO."

To provide the right services, Brouillard may send a client out to one of its sister companies for a high-powered corporate identity overhaul, for a massive public relations campaign, or for certain kinds of advertising elements—all as part of a unified, structured plan.

Breeding familiarity

Foster observes that, with the rare exception in which familiarity breeds contempt—when corporate ads work against the company's desired image (a time when the company must stop all corporate communications, figure out what's wrong, and fix it)—"the better known you are, the better regarded you will be. Awareness breeds familiarity breeds favorability," he says.

Awareness or name recognition can be stimulated through corporate ads; familiarity with what the company does through ads and other communications tactics. Favorability—positive regard for how the company operates and what it produces—is affected by everything a company says and does, by its planned and unplanned communications.

If a company does not have the reputation it deserves, due to the lag time between change and perception of the change, or stubborn misconceptions based on outdated or false information, corporate communications can help set the record straight.

"If a company doesn't tell its own story, someone else—perhaps the media or the competition—may tell it for them, and not necessarily the way the company would like," Foster says.

While he extols the value of corporate advertising and communications, Foster emphasizes one important caveat: "Putting up a false front—whether distorting the facts, or inventing an image at odds with the company character—is a waste of money," he says. "No one can give a company a better reputation than it deserves." □

Joan Reisman is a Manhattan-based writer and consultant whose clients include public relations firms, ad agencies, corporations and hospitals. Among her articles in consumer and professional publications was the cover story on quality control in the March 1989 issue of Public Relations Journal.

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Corporate advertising expenditures:

Healthy increases the rule

The value of corporate advertising is borne out by its continued growth, outpacing advertising as a whole. For 18 years now, *Public Relations Journal* has been tracking trends in corporate and professional organization advertising expenditures.

The 1988 figures compiled by Leading National Advertisers/Arbitron Multi-Media Service show increases in companies' corporate advertising media expenditures overall, with gains in magazines, network TV and cable TV more than offsetting declines in spot and syndicated TV and a major drop (34.4%) in radio expenditures. Network TV spending, which surpassed magazines for the first time in 1987, increased its lead in 1988. Overall, corporate ad expenditures were up 6 percent from 1987, to $1.25 million.

Professional associations showed even more consistent rises in corporate ad spending overall (up 9 percent from 1987, to $1.21 million) and in every medium except outdoor advertising. The most notable jump was in cable TV (up 6 percent).

Comparing the list of the top 10 nine-media corporate advertisers for this year with 1987's list, Citicorp, K Mart and Macy Acquiring Corp. replaced Prudential Insurance, Chrysler and U.S. Sprint. The only change in the corresponding list of association spenders was the entry of the Chrysler Corporation Dealer Association and the exit of its Nissan counterpart.

While the spending levels of the top 10 corporate advertisers in *The Wall Street Journal* (*see tables, page 22*) were similar to those of 1987, the list of spenders changed. Last year's top spender, Drexel Burnham Lambert, which has been plagued by the insider trading scandal, dropped to fifth place, with just over half of its prior dollar volume. Four newcomers—IBM, United Technologies, Salomon Inc. and NYNEX—replaced JP Morgan, Citicorp, Goldman Sachs and Xerox.

Among associations, no one matched last year's highest *WSJ* advertising expenditure ($885,540 from American Gas). But in general, it took more money to make it into the top 10 this year. Half the names were not from the 1987 group.

Corporate expenditures

	9-MEDIA TOTAL	Consumer Magazines
REPORT TOTAL		
1988	1,249,656	388,228
1987	1,174,971	360,724
Percent change	6.4%	7.6%
1986	792,035	341,964
Percent change	48.3%	5.5%
1985	729,754	319,193
Percent change	8.5%	7.1%
1984	742,527	284,264

Association expenditures

	9-MEDIA TOTAL	Consumer Magazines
REPORT TOTAL		
1988	1,205,237	87,013
1987	1,102,706	85,643
Percent change	9.3%	1.6%
1986	844,607	79,898
Percent change	31.1%	7.2%
1985	647,045	73,638
Percent change	31.0%	8.5%
1984	477,402	56,020

Corporate advertising expenditures 1984–1988

nine media

(in $ thousands)

Newspaper Supplements	Newspapers	Outdoor	Network Television	Spot Television	Syndicated Television	Cable TV Networks	Network Radio
11,951	210,495	8,102	436,889	156,983	5,923	12,784	18,302
12,088	211,688	8,171	372,852	163,818	6,973	10,767	27,890
(1.1%)	—	—	17.2%	(4.2%)	(15.1%)	18.7%	(34.4%)
11,819	—	8,024	252,816	140,338	2,018	9,794	25,262
2.3%	—	1.8%	47.5%	16.7%	246.0%	10.0%	10.0%
10,343	—	4,498	266,973	103,979	—	11,317	13,451
14.3%	—	78.4%	(5.3%)	35.1%	—	(13.5%)	87.8%
9,698	—	3,298	338,138	97,199	—	—	9,930

Newspaper Supplements	Newspapers	Outdoor	Network Television	Spot Television	Syndicated Television	Cable TV Networks	Network Radio
3,724	125,831	6,315	173,605	768,191	6,760	15,835	17,962
3,614	96,253	7,349	156,625	722,464	5,554	9,685	15,519
3.0%	31.0%	(14.1%)	11.0%	6.3%	21.7%	64.0%	15.7%
5,865	—	8,108	148,509	572,961	3,346	6,160	19,760
(38.4%)	—	(9.4%)	5.5%	26.1%	66.1%	57.2%	(21.5%)
5,474	—	7,202	128,480	412,587	—	3,098	16,565
7.1%	—	12.6%	15.6%	38.9%	—	99.0%	19.3%
2,346	—	4,748	90,793	311,068	—	—	12,426

Source: LNA/Arbitron Multi-Media service as compiled and published by Leading National Advertisers, Inc. Cable TV media data was added to the database in 1985, syndicated TV in 1986 and Media Records newspapers in 1987. Numbers are rounded to nearest whole digit.

Although print ads in trade journals and such business media as *WSJ* and *The New York Times, Business Week, Forbes* and *Fortune* continue to be the mainstay of corporate advertising, the increases in network and cable TV are not surprising.

"TV is the quickest way to build awareness," says James Foster, president and CEO of Brouillard Communications. "Print can give you depth, and corporate ads will always need a print base to reach the targets TV misses, but TV can deliver more emotion and simplified messages through effective soundbites."

Foster adds that cable TV lends itself to segmenting audiences, making TV advertising more affordable than ever before.—*J.R.*

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Corporations

Parent Company	9-MEDIA TOTAL	Consumer Magazines
1. AT&T	93,190	13,631
2. Ford Motor	45,397	17,065
3. General Electric	40,013	2,111
4. Dow Chemical	34,625	3,283
5. IBM	34,029	10,298
6. Citicorp	33,842	5,432
7. General Motors	30,963	14,708
8. Sears Roebuck	30,623	5,384
9. K Mart	29,918	861
10. Macy Acquiring Corp	29,906	107
TOP 10 TOTAL	402,505	72,880
TOTAL: ALL OTHERS	846,486	315,348
Report Total (all companies reporting)	1,249,656	388,228

Associations

Parent Company	9-MEDIA TOTAL	Consum Magazi
1. GM Corp. Dealers Assn.	220,320	
2. Ford Auto Dealers Assn.	140,116	
3. Chrysler Corp. Dealers Assn.	113,648	
4. American Dairy Assn.	82,031	
5. Toyota Auto Dealers Assn.	67,521	
6. Hyundai Group	38,409	
7. Toyo Kogyo Co. Auto Dealers Assn.	37,589	
8. Honda Dealers Assn.	37,096	
9. National Live Stock & Meat Board	36,611	5,
10. Blue Cross & Blue Shield Assn.	36,181	2,
TOP 10 TOTAL	809,521	8,
TOTAL: ALL OTHERS	373,278	7
Report Total (all companies reporting)	1,205,236	87

Top 10 corporate ad spenders

nine media

January to December 1988
(Ranked by total media dollars in $ thousands)

Newspaper Supplements	Newspapers	Outdoor	Network Television	Spot Television	Syndicated Television	Cable TV Networks	Network Radio
77	217	—	73,307	2,316	1,439	1,818	385
103	439	150	22,124	172	124	122	5,098
23	263	6	35,936	1,575	—	7	92
379	—	47	26,651	1,871	—	244	2,150
379	1,324	8	20,406	1,403	—	—	210
—	—	—	26,397	441	137	1,435	—
703	543	166	11,834	624	182	269	1,934
—	21,261	—	—	1,186	—	17	2,776
—	5,365	—	20,371	1,870	948	502	—
—	27,692	—	—	2,107	—	—	—
1,664	57,103	377	237,026	13,566	2,830	4,414	12,645
10,287	152,957	7,650	199,862	143,263	3,093	8,370	5,656
11,951	210,495	8,102	436,889	156,983	5,923	12,784	18,302

Newspaper Supplements	Newspapers	Outdoor	Network Television	Spot Television	Syndicated Television	Cable TV Networks	Network Radio
—	23,656	5	—	196,644	—	14	—
—	38,665	1,234	42	100,175	—	—	—
—	3,619	—	8,560	101,380	—	88	—
298	227	650	49,662	15,460	3,485	6,301	5,088
—	2,463	7	—	65,051	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	38,409	—	—	—
—	2,226	—	—	35,362	—	—	—
—	371	7	—	36,719	—	—	—
—	—	—	24,308	3,109	—	234	3,642
39	—	900	17,553	15,342	—	—	222
337	71,227	2,804	100,126	607,651	3,485	6,637	8,952
3,387	46,265	3,335	73,480	146,774	3,154	9,164	9,010
3,724	125,831	6,315	173,605	768,191	6,760	15,835	17,962

Source: LNA/Arbitron Multi-Media Service as compiled and published by Leading National Advertisers, Inc. Cable TV media data was added to database in 1985, syndicated TV in 1986 and Media Records newspapers in 1987. Numbers are rounded to nearest whole digit.